



Wordsworth Primary School

School Grounds NOW & FUTURE

Report from the Landscape Strategy Workshops
March and April 2022



School Vision;.....

- *We will build a school where everyone belongs*
- *We will build a community empowered to make a difference for generations to come*
- *Together we will build a future beyond our imagination*

Completed October 2022

Introduction

Two workshops were planned to support development of a Landscape Strategy for the school grounds, to guide how they develop, are used, designed and managed in the future.

This report summarises the main findings from the workshops to help the school review the outside learning environment and make positive change for pupils of all ages at the school

The workshops took place on the 16th and 23rd March 2022
Facilitation of the events were provided by Catherine Eldred, Principal Landscape Architect of the Landscape Strategy Team, at Hampshire County Council.

Contents

This report summarises the main findings from the workshops taking place to help the school review the school environment.

"Where are we NOW?"

43 pupils within the school, support staff, and a selection of parents and governors attended Workshop 1 alongside Mrs Palfrey the Headteacher of Wordsworth Primary School and the Business Manager Michelle Williams. The second session held after school was attended by 28 teaching staff plus representatives from the Hamwic Trust.

Activities undertaken across the 2 sessions included;

- Rate the Space ps 3-4
- Key points pg 5
 - Play, Socialising, Breaks and Lunchtimes
 - Outdoor Teaching & Learning
 - Natural Environment
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Welcome, arrival, access and circulation
 - Community and Context, and
- "Our Vision— *We would like our school grounds to be a place where*" pg 6

"Where do we want to be?"

A similar number attended Workshop 2 and this lead on from Workshop 1. On this occasion however we concentrated on looking to the future of the school grounds and how they could develop for the future.

- Future Spaces pg 7 and 8
- Zoning Plans pg 9 and 10
- Emerging Strategy Plan p 11

Where are we NOW?

Rate the Space—

All pupils and staff looked at images of the school grounds in advance of the workshop. Feedback on the favourites to talk about was then given at the event to discuss aspects of the grounds as they currently are. And the positive and negative aspects of them. The information below is a culmination of what was discussed by everyone at the workshop.



Location 1

Location 1 is known as The Playground. It was described by the pupils as *"rock solid and spacious, but boring with nothing to do out there..."* It feels *"worn out, and dangerous"* to some but others described it as *"fun and exciting"*,.... It's a welcoming space as lets lots of ball sports take place and is a very active happy active play space! Sadly though it was said by everyone that its just not big enough for all the children playing out on it!



Location 2 is The Field. This area scored 10/10 for use however only 4/10 for quality. The use is because it is described as a great space for football and for eating outside (when its allowed), plus it feels lovely and spacious. However the lower score for quality is due to the mud, the lack of grass, poor drainage and also too much littering that happens through the school day.



Location 3

Location 3 is known as The Nature Zone. It is an area loved by the children, but described as not used as much as it could be. It scored 5/10 for quality and use, and it was mentioned the space does feel calm in comparison to much of the rest of the grounds.

Location 4 is The Rainbow Playground which is a space dedicated for use by the Pre-School. Sadly it rarely used and was described as feeling *"rusty, mouldy and terrible"*. Through discussion it was understood that due to the pathway that cuts this space off from the main outside space and so becomes too difficult to use due to staff numbers.



Location 4

Location 5 is The Climbing Frame and Astro. Although the children enjoy the ability to climb the area was described as *"hugely disappointing"* due to the bumpy surface making running around here forbidden for safety reasons. It also floods and ponds with water and it becomes difficult to manage when younger siblings are on site at the end of the day.



Location 5

Location 6 is known as The Year 1 Garden and was sadly described as *"boring and bland"*. It is rarely used mainly due to a lack of shelter from the weather, both rain and sun, and also an adjacent door meaning there is a main thoroughfare through the area from the main building. It scored 4/10 for quality and 3/10 for use..

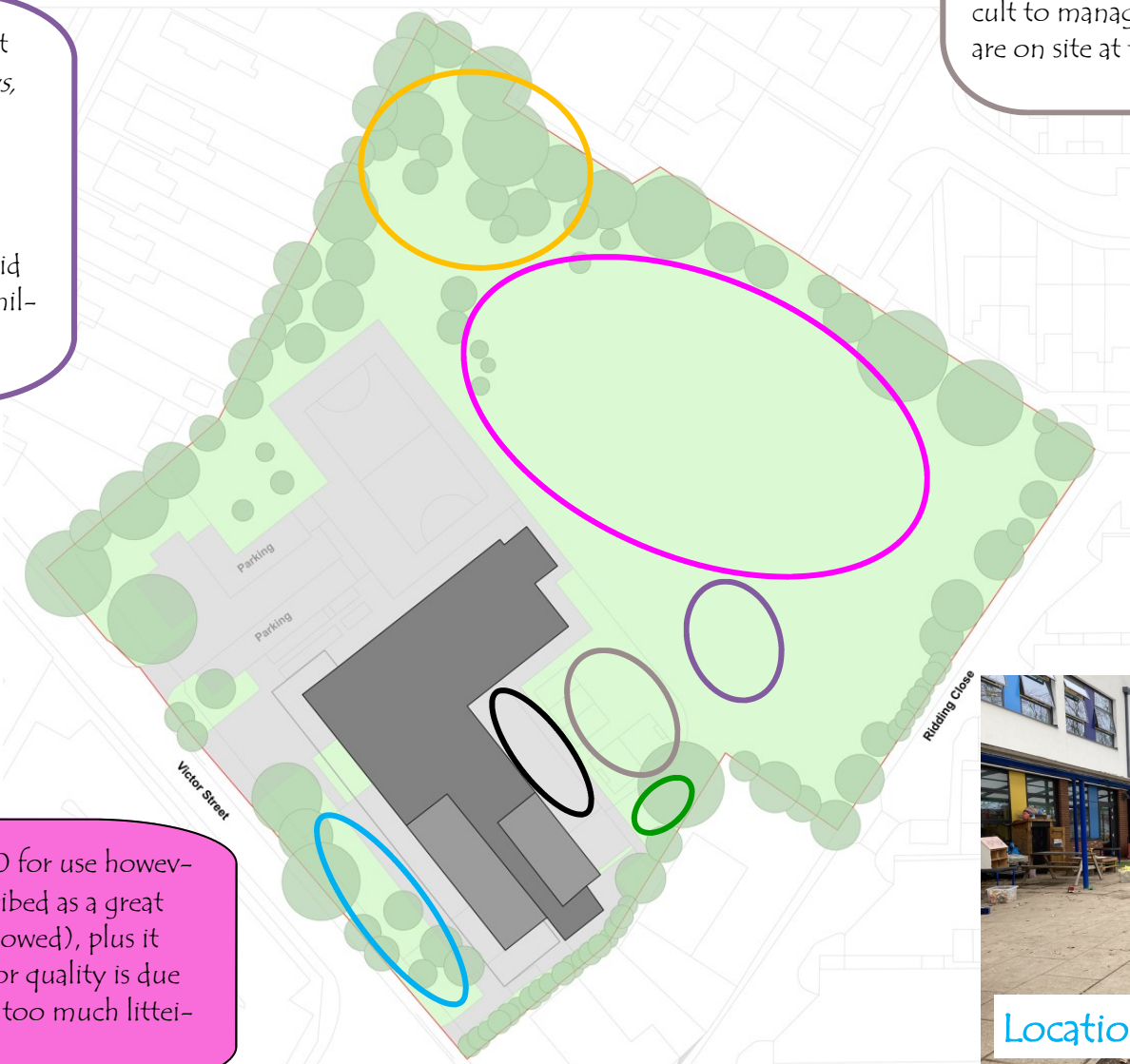


Location 6

Location 7 is known as The Year R outside space. There is a huge difference of opinion about the area from *"It makes me feel young again!"*, and its *"Messy, chaotic, crazy but fun"*, to *"Its unsafe and dull"*, and *"there are too many trip hazards as its too full of stuff!"* It scored 0/10 for quality, but 10/10 for use.



Location 7



Where are we NOW?

Key points Participants worked together in groups to discuss how the grounds are currently used. Key points from the topics discussed are shown below.....

Access, Circulation, Arrival and Welcome

- Current pathways are not fit for purpose and get congested by the numbers of parents needing to use them at pick up time in particular. The size of gates around the site limits access causing congestion.
- First impressions could be improved as hard surfacing looks very stark, is lacking in colour and not considered child friendly.
- Signage around the site, and particularly at the front entrance could be improved to give a greater sense of welcome to visitors to the school.
- Bad drainage across the site causes flooding in many areas, and makes the entire field area unusable. With over 600 children at the school this makes most of the grounds unusable on wet days sadly causing more frequent wet play days.

Play, Breaktimes and Socialising

- Football games unfortunately cause worry and tension amongst pupils as a lack of designated space results in freely flying balls that sometimes cause injuries to others on the periphery.
- Grounds aren't considered suitably zoned to provide the variety of play that could give children more choice and more enrichment throughout the year.
- A lack of toilets available for the children to use at break and lunchtimes whilst out using the grounds is a real issue within school. 2 toilets for 630 children is not enough.
- The climbing area and the Astro could be better as the surface is uneven causing supervision concerns and the area has to be used on a rota due to a lack of space for the numbers within school.

Health and Well Being

- Although it is recognized that the grounds do provide the space for many pupils growing up in the surrounding flats the ability to run around it was also mentioned that as they currently are it could be better. The outside spaces when being used by so many at the same time aren't actively seen as benefitting the health and well being of many at the school.
- Currently there is a lack of calm space, no places for quiet time, uneven slippery and wet ground, litter is a problem and the numbers of pupils in such a small space results in a large number of bumps and scrapes.
- However it was thought that there are currently quite a few benches that do enable children to sit with friends and eat lunch outside and socialize although there could be more!
- *"How could we make the roof terrace useable, this would be an amazing space to spend time away from the classroom"*

Outdoor Teaching and Learning

- It was discussed that although some lessons do go outside it is mainly the younger year groups and this gets less as pupils reach KS2.
- Some outside areas although currently designated as spaces for outdoor learning are currently unused due to a variety of reasons. The Year 1 garden space is considered lacking in shade and shelter to be used often as to exposed to the elements and no storage in which to safely hold resources that could be used. It is lacking in static resources too and so feels very barren and bland. Similarly the Roof Terrace which has been considered useable by the older years groups for outside learning is rarely used as covered with leaves and staff have concerns about safety at this higher level.
- Generally outside spaces are considered prohibitively muddy, uneven and with bad drainage. A lack of shade and shelter was also mentioned as a block to this happening more too.

The Natural Environment

- Although within the city wildlife is still prevalent within the grounds of the school. The Nature Zone celebrates the natural world and encourages a closeness to nature by the pupils by undertaking mini beast hunts, using the bug hotels, enjoying wildflowers and the natural qualities of the trees too.
- Foxes are known to be within the grounds and signs can be seen with fox holes around the edges.
- Overgrown hedges although untidy do house birds and often bird song can be heard and enjoyed when outside in small numbers.
- The pond area is sometimes used as are the planting boxes but not as often as they could be.

Context and Community

- The school already house a number of After School and Holiday Clubs that engage children from the school and the local area throughout the year.
- Community events that use the grounds such as the Fayres at Christmas and in the summer are always popular and well attended and the school are keen that the grounds can be seen as the heart of the local community and used accordingly.
- Issues regarding the context however are concerns regarding the perimeter fencing and associated safeguarding issues.

Where do we want to be?....



Property Services

"Our Vision" – Participants worked individually to complete the sentence.....

"We would like our school grounds to be a place where....."

- Where it's a colourful place to be and looks nice and pretty to everyone.
- Where we all feel safe
- A place where everyone has fun and no-one is bored!
- Where everyone can play anyone and it feels fair to all
- A place with more to do!
- Where there is shelter, and we can all be dry or in shade
- Where there are spaces in which we can chill out
- A place we can play football
- Where the space we have feels larger than it is
- A place that feels beautiful, gives a home to animals and nature and is kept tidy by everyone.
- A place where balls don't feel like they are everywhere
- A place for fun with more equipment for us to be physically active
- A place where people feel happy
- Where we could use all of our spaces every day throughout the year
- Where anyone new feels welcomed to the school
- More things to play with and on would be fun
- Where we feel safe; can have fun, can be active, supports our learning
- Less muddy please
- A place we could be more creative
- Somewhere that is more challenging for play
- Inclusion of water for peace and tranquillity
- Where its more possible to spend more time outside
- A place to enjoy reading outside
- Where we get to enjoy all areas

- Where we can increase time spent outside
- Children can explore and be inspired
- Where children can be children
- A space where children feel safe and have freedom to explore new ideas, and their community
- A space in which to feel safe and happy
- Where you can play, and socialise in a variety of ways
- Somewhere children can develop physically and emotionally
- A place children feel valued, and know that they are cared for
- Where sustainability is understood and adhered to
- Everyone is welcome
- Somewhere to thrive, our senses are aroused, but where feet do not get wet
- Place to spend time with friends or read alone and in peace
- Places that make children truly love their learning
- Children feel excited to be here
- Where games enjoyed by children can be varied
- Somewhere to connect with nature and feel free
- Excited, welcomed and inspired
- Where children play creatively
- Where we are proud of our environment
- Everyone can explore the natural environment and let their imaginations run free

Where do we want to be?...

Future spaces

Participants selected images to describe the kind of spaces they would like to see in the future school grounds. They discussed these in groups and then presented their thoughts on positive and negative aspects of the selected images. The choice of images and discussion is summarised here.



Places to **CLIMB**... And contact with sand to play in for sensory interaction.



The chance to be adventurous, to hang, to climb, to balance and to challenge ourselves!



Creating a **WELCOMING FRONTAGE** to the school



Areas that encourage **IMAGINATIVE PLAY** and **CREATIVITY**. Role play and collaboration. Places that inspire topics and writing.

Contact with the natural world. **Pond Dipping** would be fantastic to do



Areas to do **PLANTING** and **GROWING** in— creating a domino effect to do more around school.



A calm space to sit with friends, to talk, to think and to have a break from the school building

Spaces to encourage **NURTURE**



Encouraging **LOOSE MATERIAL** play... creativity and problem solving



A **Book Nook** space to develop a love of books and reading

A **Physical Development Space** to enjoy active play activities with friends at free time and in lesson time



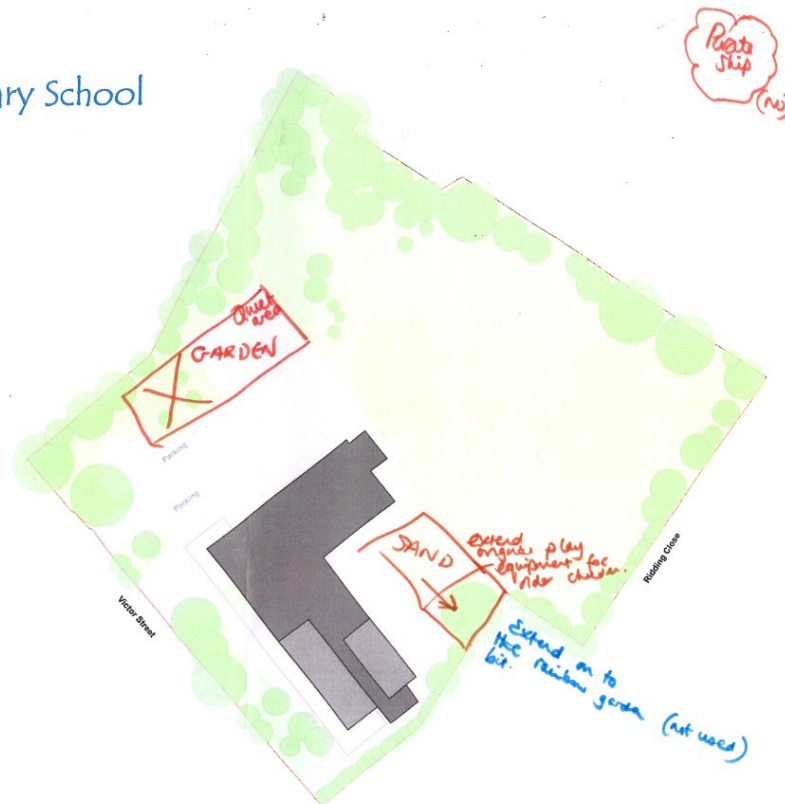
GROW, COOK, EAT



A **sheltered space** to have cover to do a wide variety of activities throughout the year.

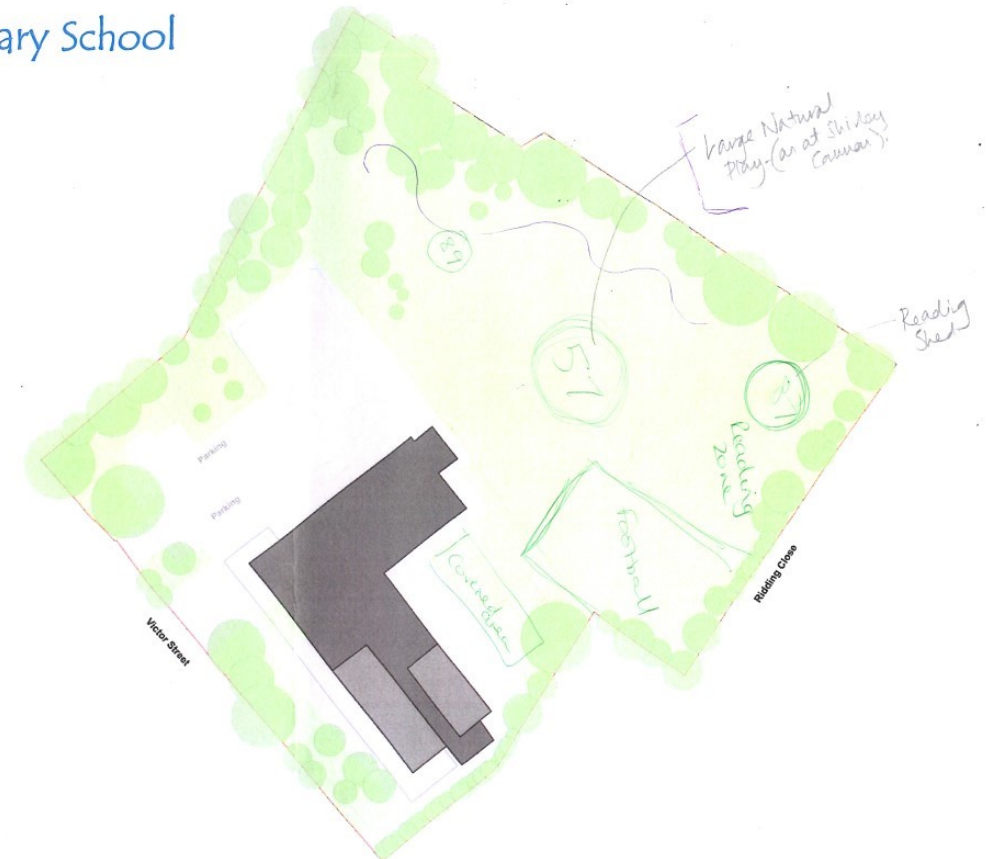
Zoning Plans from Workshop 2

Wordsworth Primary School
Zoning Plan

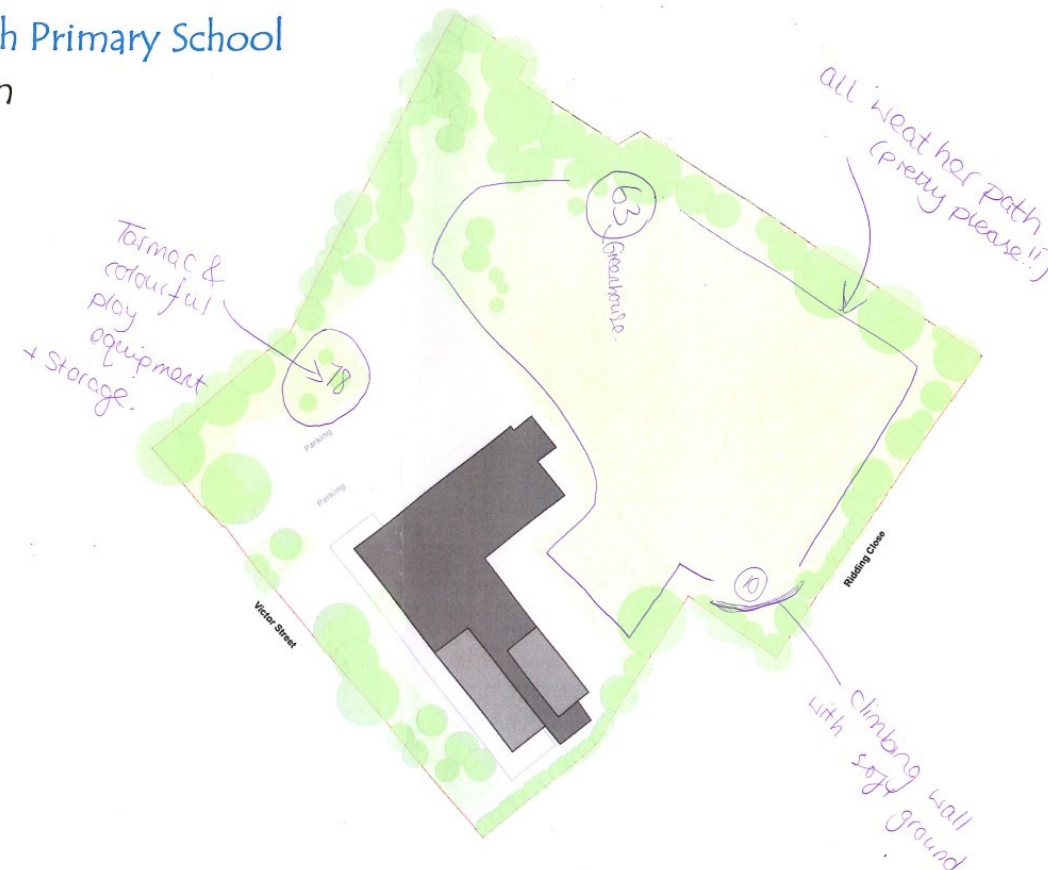


Teaching and support staff at the school worked in groups, using maps to 'Zone' the school grounds and further refine the ambition for the future. Each presented how they would like to see the grounds develop over time. Copies of each groups work is included here and has been used to draft the **Emerging Key Principles** and the **Emerging Strategy Plan**.

Wordsworth Primary School
Zoning Plan

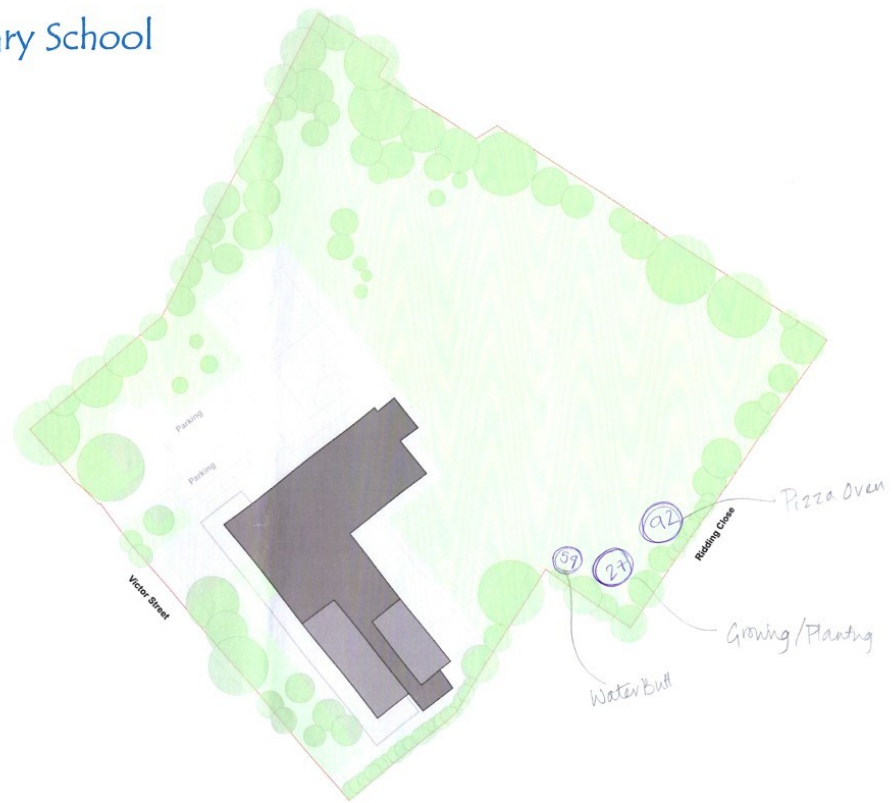


Wordsworth Primary School
Zoning Plan

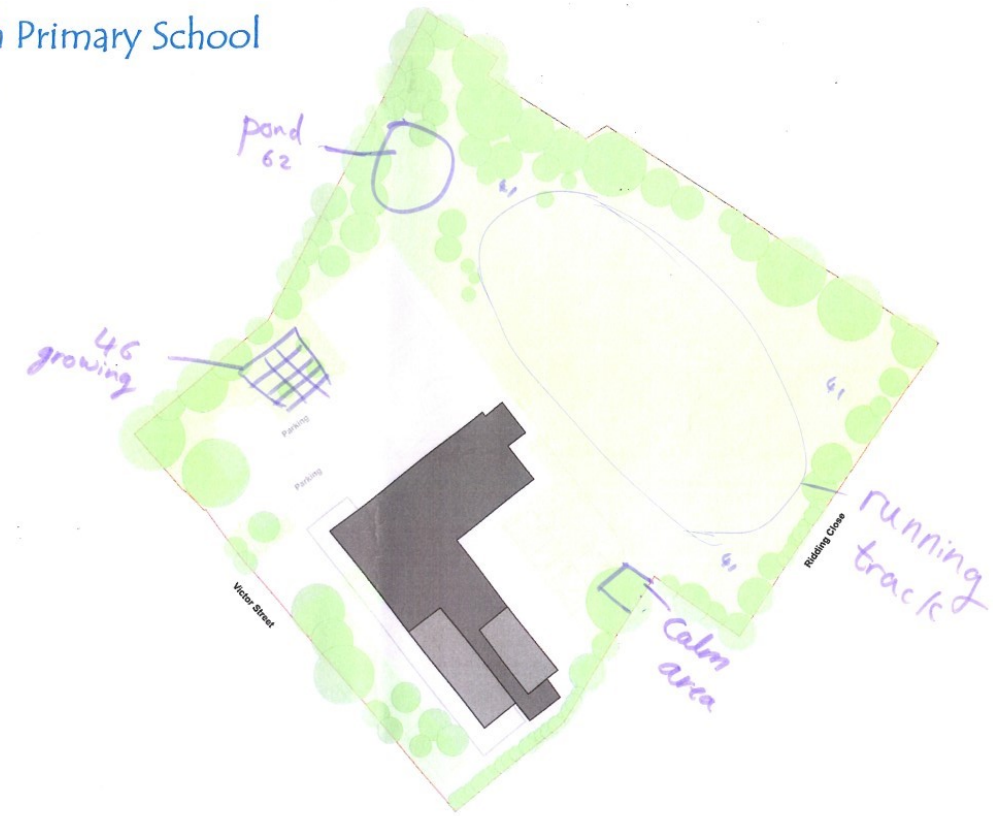


Zoning Plans from Workshop 2

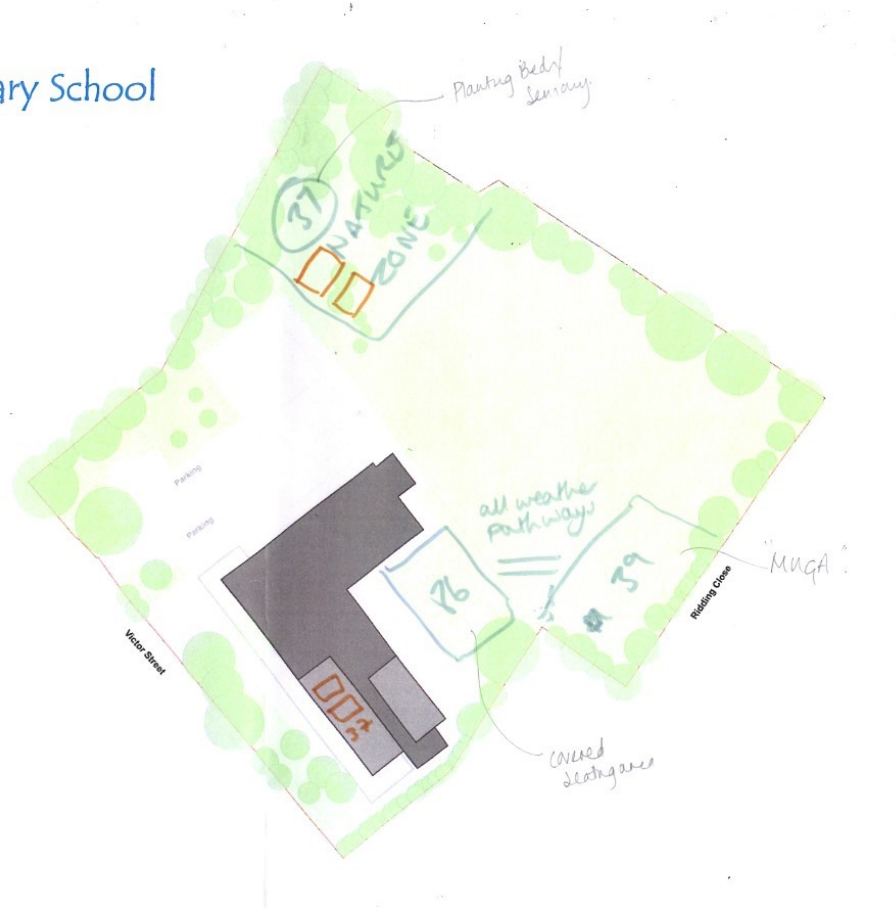
Wordsworth Primary School
Zoning Plan



Wordsworth Primary School
Zoning Plan



Wordsworth Primary School
Zoning Plan



Wordsworth Primary School, Shirley

Emerging Strategy Plan

Area 1: All weather Astro space

Ambition: To create an all year round, all weather "grass" playing field that is free draining and can be used in all weathers.

Ideas and Requirements:

- Explore drainage needed for the field area to become useable all year round and in all weathers. Potentially contact other local schools to visit similar artificial grass spaces and the construction needed to ensure this becomes useable regardless how many pupils are within the school.
- Area to continue to be used for free play at break and lunchtimes but marking researched to enable sports to be played and other schools invited in for match-

Area 2: Multi Use Games Area

Ambition: To provide a safe and secure fenced space in which all ball games can be played and enjoyed.

Ideas and Requirements

- Discuss ideas further with site management within the Trust regarding ability to locate a MUGA as shown however retaining access to the field for fire appliances should the need arise.
- Explore fencing and suitable surfacing required for the area to enable enjoyment of both curriculum sport and also for free play ball games at break and lunchtimes.
- Removal of existing fence line as shown to provide more space for both vehicular and pedestrian movement through this area.
- Mounding created within the space to break it up and give undulation to the field.

Area 3: Planting and Growing Area

Ambition: Development of an area for pupils to get involved in planting, growing and nurture of fruit, vegetables and flowers.

Ideas and Requirements:

- Relocate existing planting beds to new location and add a polytunnel to enable this activity to happen all year round. Additional water butts to be included to encourage watering of the area using collected water.
- Discuss idea further with wider school community to develop links with local allotment owners for guidance and advice. Engage with people keen to both use for their own benefit, but also to work with the children to learn additional skills.
- Include new footpath links to the newly installed Cabin for Outdoor Learning as shown.

Area 4: Natural Play Trail

Ambition— Creation of a natural play trail that has clear age appropriate spaces for KS1 and KS2.

Ideas and Requirements

- Area to encourage pupils to climb, balance, and challenge themselves, and to develop core strength and gross motor skills.
- Linking pathway to enable the area to be used all year round.
- Supervision of the area to be further discussed with all staff and additional training sought to encourage a Play Leader attitude to risk benefit and to further learn resilience and tenacity.

Area 5: Loose Material Play

Ambition: To create a variety of play that encourages creativity, teamwork, and engineering skills with the pupils, and is a place where all ages can work and play together.

Ideas and Requirements

- Research the ideas around Loose Material Play further using the Play Scotland document, and share with wider school community.

Area 6: Amphitheatre

Ambition: A space to gather, to perform, to learn, to sit with friends and for classes to work together in a wide variety of ways.

Ideas and Requirements

- Discuss further detailed design of the area including the orientation, and materials used.

Describing our ambition for the grounds

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Develop spaces to be multi purpose and for as many uses as possible.
- To create a variety of spaces to be used throughout the year and in all weathers
- Where we can provide the physical development experience needed by our pupils.
- Where links with our wider community encourage activities eg—gardening and other multi generational experiences.
- For our grounds to develop in a sustainable way and with an understanding of the natural world around us.
- To develop a place where our school grounds enable our school VALUES to come to life—Empowerment, Community, Learning, Trust and Nurturing.

Area 7: Covered Seating Area

Ambition: A multi purpose space to enable use in both curriculum time and at free time for social reasons.

Ideas and Requirements

- Covered awning/canopy to ensure rain or strong sunlight would not detract from lessons being held outside. Explore ideas around size, shape, construction and materials to ensure it achieves its long term aim.
- Seating and tables to be used as a base, and also as an area in which pupils can enjoy eating lunch outside together and developing communication skills.

★ Area 8: Sensory Trail

Ambition: To enhance the existing Nature Area with an additional Sensory Trail to enhance health and well being of pupils through colour, smell, touch, taste and sound. A place of calm and tranquillity.

Ideas and Requirements

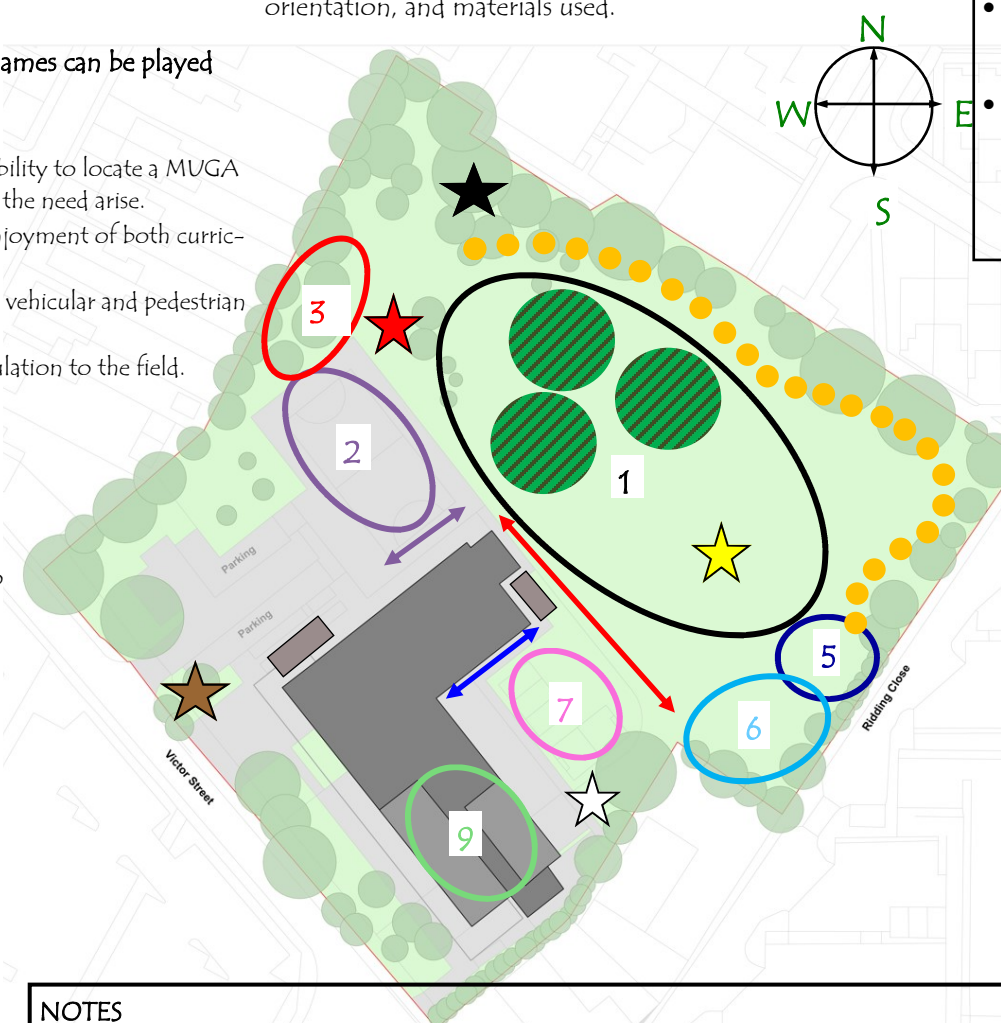
- A rolling programme of installations within the space could enhance the Trail to include curriculum topics within Art, Music, Drama, DT, English, Maths and all the subjects within KS1 and KS2 learning..

Area 9: "Learning Lounge"

Ambition: To provide an area for small groups of pupils to gather for guided curriculum activities, and as a place where clubs could meet to enjoy the space this elevated area provides.

Ideas and Requirements

- Discuss additional safety measures needed to enable this area to be used, and visit other schools where this has already taken place to learn from their experience.



NOTES

- Blocks of 6 standalone lockable outside toilets available for pupils to use at break and lunchtimes.
- Sheltered canopy space for groups to gather or pupils to enjoy a place of shelter and shade during free time.
- Table Tennis table area
- Area to be resurfaced and inclusion of a planting filled with herbs to create a sensory welcome to the school.
- Pizza Oven space for outdoor cooking, DT lessons and for events at school.
- Climbing Wall with colour coded hand and foot holds to indicate KS1 and KS2

Wordsworth Primary School

Early Years Strategy Plan

Designated Zones

1—Role Play / Home corner

An area to provide and encourage open ended play with appropriate resources made available to the children in storage they can access

2—Mud Kitchen Area

A space created for mud kitchen activity with all the kitchen resources needed for this type of play and learning and the ability to mix mud and water to enjoy “cooking”. Located next to the water butt to enable this to happen in a controlled way.

3—Construction Area

Material of resources within the space to include a mixture of both natural and man-made.

4—Active Play Area

Using the existing trees and slope add in additional climbing and gross motor skill development equipment.

5—Creative Area

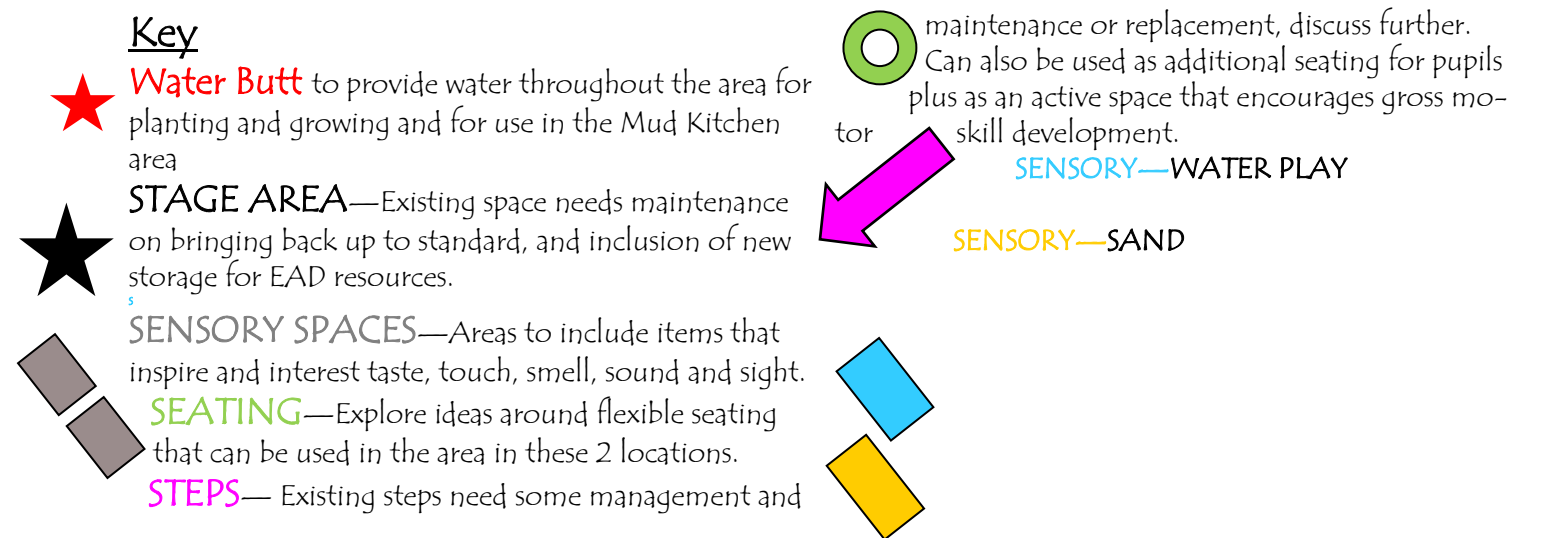
A space dedicated for pupils be creative with a wide range of materials including painting, writing, clay modelling etc.

6— Nature Area / Quiet Space / Reading

A space from which children can observe other areas and activities taking place.

7—Key Stage 2 Climbing Area





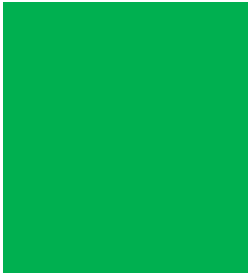


Current Pre-school area to be redesignated as a climbing area for Year 2 outside supervised play. Visit other local schools for inspiration.



Action Plan for Wordsworth Primary School

Key	
<div></div>	go ahead
<div></div>	explore/discuss further
<div></div>	wait until later

	Area	Requirements	By whom	Success Criteria	Costings	Priority	Achieved
Location 1a	All Weather Astro Space	<p>Contact HCC Landscape Team to discuss the potential for Design and Project Management of a drainage scheme for this area to become engineered to ensure becoming free draining and useable throughout the year.</p> <p>Include Sheltered Canopy Space as shown within the notes on the Landscape Strategy Plan.</p>	Mark Hannibal and Julie-Anne Palfrey	Area to become useable all year round for free play, and to be come an area that can also be used for all other alternative zoning as shown on the Landscape Strategy Plan.	TBC	<div></div>	
Location 2	Multi Use Games Area	Discuss ideas further with site management within the Trust regarding ability to locate a MUGA as shown however retaining access to the field for fire appliances should the need arise.	Hugh Jenkinson and Emma Harvey		TBC	<div></div>	
Location 3	Planting and Growing Area	<p>Development of an area for pupils to get involved in planting, growing and nurture of fruit, vegetables and flowers.</p> <p>Relocate existing planting beds to new location and add a polytunnel to enable this activity to happen all year round. Additional water butts to be included to encourage watering of the area using collected water.</p> <p>Discuss idea further with wider school community to develop links with local allotment owners for guidance and advice. Engage with people keen to both use for their own benefit, but also to work with the children to learn additional skills.</p> <p>Include new footpath links to the newly installed Cabin for Outdoor Learning as shown.</p>	Maddie Prudence and Kim Davis		TBC	<div></div>	
Location 4	Natural Play Trail	<p>Julie-Anne Palfrey to contact Nicky at the Itchen Valley Country Park and Andy Frost Artist for potential collaberative project with the pupils</p> <p>Take School Council members to Moors Valley Country Park to explore design ideas for new natural Play Features</p>	Julie Anne Palfrey		TBC	<div></div>	
Location 5	Loose Material Play	<p>To create a variety of play that encourages creativity, teamwork, and engineering skills with the pupils, and is a place where all ages can work and play together.</p> <p>Research the ideas around Loose Material Play further using the Play Scotland document, and share with wider school community.</p>	Claire Workman		TBC	<div></div>	

Location 6	Amphitheatre	Discuss further detailed design of the area including the orientation, and materials used with all teaching staff and create a mood board of what teaching staff would like to see and encourage them to taking teaching outside the classroom.	Janine Beasley	TBC	
Location 7	Covered Seating Area	Explore varieties of covered awning/canopy to ensure rain or strong sunlight would not detract from lessons being held outside. Consider different ideas around size, shape, construction and materials to ensure it achieves its long term aim and visit other schools to see what examples might work best in this location.	Julie-Anne Palfrey	TBC	
Location 8	Sensory Trail	A rolling programme of installations within the space could enhance the Trail to include curriculum topics within Art, Music, Drama, DT, English, Maths and all the subjects within KS1 and KS2 learning. Discuss further with all teaching staff to tie in this development of this area to curriculum learning to embed the use of this area in lesson planning.	Maddie Prudence	TBC	
Location 9	"Learning Lounge"	Explore the ideas of using this space further by visiting and talking to other schools in urban areas who are using similar spaces.	Becky Hinton	TBC	
	EARLY YEARS outside learning environment	Contact Scandor Landscape Contractors to discuss the area further with regards to a design and build project in line with the EY Strategy Plan and the need for new surface treatments to be installed throughout. Include adjacent area of sensory herb planting by the front of the school as shown within the notes on the Landscape Strategy Plan.	Julie -Anne Palfrey and Claire Workman	TBC	
	Standalone toilet block facilities	Discuss design and build needs and requirements further with the Trust to encourage installation of these as soon as possible to improve health and well-being of the pupils.	Julie-Anne Palfrey and Mark Hannibal	TBC	
	Table Tennis Tables	Explore the options available for table tennis tables, the best surface to be set on and the security measure to ensure their safety out of hours.	Julie- Anne Palfrey		
	Pizza Oven Area	Research the design of a pizza oven structure to be made in house by the Wordsworth Team for use at events and celebrations during the school year.	Elaine Moles		